Galleria mellonella. The fact that they are called butterflies is easily explained by this being a work translated from the French where "Papillon" translates as "butterfly", moth being "Papillon de nuit" and all French books in my library with "Papillons" in the title deal with both moths and butterflies.

References: Knaggs, H.G., 1866. The new American moth trap. *The Entomologist's Monthly Magazine,* **2**: 199-202; Glover, Townend, 1856. *Insects frequenting the cotton plant.* In: Report of the Commissioner of Patents for the year 1855, Washington, DC; Petiver, James, 1695. Letter to John Scampton, March 17th, Sloane MS 3332.f.128v; Wilkinson, R.S., 1969. Townend Glover (1813-83) and the first entomological light trap. *The Michigan Entomologist,* **2**: 55-62; Wilkinson, R.S., 1974. The sources of Townend Glover's "American moth trap." *The Great Lakes Entomologist,* **7**: 127-128.

– BRIAN O.C. GARDINER, 2 Highfield Avenue, Cambridge CB4 2AL.

***Aplota palpella* (Haw.), (Lep.: Oecophoridae) new to the Midland Plateau**

During warm summer evenings when working in my study, it is occasionally my habit to leave a window slightly open whilst at the same time switching on the 22-watt ring light on my drawing table. It is not improbable that a number of readers have done a similar thing when for some reason conventional moth trapping is off the agenda: it gives one the feeling of at least being partially in touch with what is going on. For much of the time the consequences are that the room is invaded by a horde of common insects which eventually cause far more trouble than anticipated as they vanish behind books and under tables! There are occasional surprises, however, and one came my way on the evening of 25th July 1994 when *Aplota palpella* (Haw.) appeared. It was about to be returned to the wilderness of my garden as a *Depressaria* when I realised that something about it was not quite right. Being only an occasional lepidopterist, I sent it to Mr R. Warren (Staffordshire County Recorder) and he revealed its identity and significance.

My garden is in no way unusual. It is bordered by 1700 acres of open country in the shape of the Sandwell Valley and our moth list has a number of unexpected components, some possibly introduced via garden plantings. It would be interesting to know if there is any evidence of an increase in numbers or northwards movement of this scarce moth during recent times. Maybe it does get overlooked, being mistaken for a *Depressaria*. My thanks go to Mr Warren for his help in this matter.– M.G. BLOXHAM, 1 St. John's Close, Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich.

***Apion sedi* Germar (Col.: Apionidae) in Dorset**

Several years ago I discovered that a small *Apion* which I had long supposed (though with no great confidence) must be an undersized and peculiar example of the common and variable *A. curtirostre* Germ., was in fact a definite *A. sedi* Germ. It was taken by grubbing on the Chesil Bank, near the Weymouth end, on one of three visits in August 1937. Curiously, this seemed to be the first known capture of the species in Dorset, though by now probably not the only one. Professor M.G. Morris had not met with *A. sedi* in

the county when I informed him of my find. Elsewhere I have taken it, again singly, at the Lizard, Deal, and in the Suffolk Breck.– A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

Hypena obsitalis (Hb.) the Bloxworth Snout (Lep.: Noctuidae) new to mainland Hampshire

At 6.50pm on 12th November 1994, as I went into our conservatory I saw an unfamiliar moth at rest on the outside of the window. It appeared to be a medium-sized snout, with pointed wings and strong lines on its underside. I hurried out but had only the briefest glimpse of its upperside before it flew off in the breeze towards my m.v. lamp. It was not until 8.15pm that I rediscovered it in a patch of shadowed wall and boxed it, recognising it from the illustrations as a female *Hypena obsitalis* Hb., the Bloxworth Snout. I was later able to obtain several photographs.

This Mediterranean species was first noted in Britain on 21st September 1884 by the Reverend Octavius Pickard Cambridge at Bloxworth in Dorset. By 1983, seven further records had been published: Cambridgeshire (1895), Dorset (1917 and 1965), Cork (1936), Cornwall (1943), Scilly (1962) and Sussex (1983). Bernard Skinner has kindly this week sent me details of four more occurrences:

Shanklin, I.O.W.	A.H. Greenham	27th January 1968
Dover, Kent	G.H. Youden	18th August 1985
Perranporth, Cornwall	F.H. Smith	8th November 1987
Brixham, South Devon	B. Henwood	29th July 1989

The Selborne insect is therefore probably the thirteenth British record as a primary immigrant. I am grateful to Barry Goater for confirming the identification and for ratifying the new to mainland Hampshire status.

It is not clear whether this specimen arrived from abroad on the southerly airstreams of the preceding week or whether it had been disturbed from hibernation by the chopping down of next-door's ivy tods on 11th November. As there is plenty of the foodplant (*Parietaria judaica*, Pellitory-of-the-wall) in this village, the discovery of a local resident or temporarily resident colony, in addition to those found since 1990 in Devon and Cornwall, might be a possibility. A thorough search is intended, since absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

References: Bernard Skinner & David Wilson, 1984. *Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles* Viking, Harmondsworth; A.M. Emmet, 1991. *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* **7**(2), Ch.3, Harley Books, Colchester; R.F. Bretherton, B. Goater & R.I. Lorimer, 1983. *Ibid.* **10** Harley Books, Colchester.

– ALASDAIR ASTON, Wake's Cottage, Selborne, Hampshire GU34 3JH.

A minor infestation of *Atropos* (Lep.: Sphingidae) in Hertfordshire, 1994

I received a call for advice in the village on 27th August this summer, from a gardener who had encountered a very large caterpillar devouring his potato plants. The description certainly fitted that of *Acherontia atropos* Linn. so I